



To: Oregon Senate Committee on Health Care
From: Charlie Swanson, President of Health Care for All Oregon - Action
Re: Support for SB 428 – time line extension for Task Force on Universal Health Care

February 22, 2020

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee,

The activists in Health Care for All Oregon-Action strongly urge you to support SB 428, which extends the timeline of the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care. The Task Force is charged with making recommendations regarding a single payer health care system in Oregon. If this is done well, it could result in a system which allows everyone in Oregon to get healthcare with no financial barriers to access, while still costing less than the status quo.

As originally envisioned, the Task Force would have had 18 months to develop their recommendations. Due to Covid and other things that came up, the time frame was much reduced. SB 428 would extend the time line, so that their report is due in the 2022 session rather than the 2021 session.

The job of the Task Force is complicated. With more time, the knowledgeable and diverse group that is the Task Force will be better able to engage more stakeholders. Since everyone is likely to need healthcare at some point, all of us are stakeholders in some manner, and it will be beneficial if more people understand the efficiencies that a single payer system can bring. With more time, more people will have a chance to help develop a supportable tax plan that would allow a single payer system to be accepted – a system that can provide better health care to more people for less money.

We urge you to pass SB 428 as soon as possible, so that the Task Force can do this important work with a more realistic schedule, one that allows them to carefully consider the issues laid out in SB 770.

Sincerely,

Charlie Swanson
President of Health Care for All Oregon-Action